

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9 and 10 were rejected.

Claims 3, 7, and 8 were objected to.

Claims 2 and 3 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Claim 1 has been amended.

New claims 11 and 12 have been added.

No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 4-12 are currently pending in the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 3, 7, and 8 are objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

In the interests of furthering prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the features of allowable claim 3 and all intervening claims. New claim 11 recites the features of allowable claim 7, and all intervening claims. New claim 12 recites the features of allowable claim 8, and all intervening claims. No new matter has been added.

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims is in immediate condition for allowance.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 6, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,520,042 to Jammer et al. ("Jammer").

As noted above, claim 1 has been amended to include the features of allowable claim 3. It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is now in immediate condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1, and dependent claims 6, 9, and 10, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Jammer is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jammer in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0040067 to Murakami et al. (“Murakami”).

Claim 4 depends from allowable amended independent claim 1.

Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Jammer and Murkami is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jammer and Murakami, and further in view of International Publication No. WO/1994/027057 to Takata (“Takata”).

Claim 5 depends from allowable amended independent claim 1.

Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Jammer, Murkami, and Takata is respectfully requested.

New Claims

As noted above, new claims 11 and 12 have been added. New claim 11 is essentially allowable claim 7 rewritten in independent form. New claim 12 is essentially allowable claim 8 rewritten in independent form. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 11 and 12 are in immediate condition for allowance.

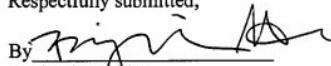
CONCLUSION

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated February 2, 2009 has been addressed on the basis of the foregoing amendments and remarks. In view of the foregoing, it is believed that each of the pending claims is in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered and that all pending claims be allowed and the case passed to issue.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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